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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**DO VILLAGES STILL MATTER?**

by

Matthew R. Lommel

December 2016

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Kalev Sepp  
Camber Warren

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**DO VILLAGES STILL MATTER?**

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Major, United States Army  
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
December 2016**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In 2014, the United Nations reported that there were 28 cities in the world with populations of over 10 million. In 2016, there were 34 of these “megacities” and by the year 2030 the UN estimates that there will be 41. As a result, concerns over rapid megacity growth have become the focus of U.S. military planners and strategists attempting to determine how to best operate in the future megacity environment. In light of these demographic shifts and in the face of rapid megacity growth, this research asks the question: Do villages still matter? Three case studies were chosen that cover a wide geographic range, selecting two contemporary cases in areas with some of the highest rates of urbanization. The historic case broadens the geographic scope of the study, but also provides historical insights into how each variable influenced success or failure once an insurgency occupied the urban terrain. Ultimately, this thesis concludes that in spite of megacity growth, if in tomorrow’s conflict the state chooses to take the fight to where the insurgent seeks refuge, it will likely occur in the mountains, jungles and deserts, for control of villages.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| ALN     | <i>Armée de Libération Nationale</i>                         |
| CPP-NPA | Communist People's Party – New People's Army                 |
| FLN     | <i>Front de Libération Nationale</i>                         |
| GDP     | Gross Domestic Product                                       |
| ISIS    | Islamic State of Iraq and Syria                              |
| LeT     | Laskar-e-Taiba   |
| MGI     | McKinsey Global Institute                                    |
| MNLF    | Moro National Liberation Front                               |
| MTLD    | <i>Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques</i> |
| PCA     | <i>Parti Communiste Algérien</i>                             |
| PKP     | <i>Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas</i>                        |
| SYP     | <i>Sandatahang Yunit Pamporpanda</i>                         |
| UN      | United Nations   |

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The descent into disorder began years before the crisis ... the murky deaths of political figures in the hinterlands are written off as banditry, local blood debts, and revenge killings unremarkable in a society long riven by internecine conflict. Seemingly random in pattern, the deaths soon become part of the rhythm of everyday life in the country, as unexplainable as they are inconsequential. The rising criminality in these areas soon block many government services in the area, a fact buried by the bureaucracy and invisible to the leaders of the state who believe that what they see in the capital is the reality of the state. Villages have no officials, taxes go uncollected, and schools have no teachers. By the time the state's police and military units lose the ability to operate in these same rural areas, the crisis has matured to an existential crisis for the state.<sup>1</sup>

—Dr. Craig Whiteside, “The Islamic State and the Return of Revolutionary Warfare,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2016

Traditional rural-based revolutionary warfare has not died in the face of growing megacities. It may, in fact, have become more profound. In the modern era, the crown jewel of some states has become its megacity. It is a source of revenue, an epicenter of international trade and in some cases it is more powerful than the state itself.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, the state will go to great lengths to defend megacities. But while the growth of these urban areas spirals out of control and the state distances itself from the rural populations, something else germinates in the shadows. The rural populations that have not fled toward this intoxicating financial prospect are left ignored by the state. The “haves” and the “have-nots” are driven further apart and finding support to resistance is simple, given the inaccessible rural terrain and exploitable social and economic disparity.

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<sup>1</sup> Craig Whiteside, “The Islamic State and the Return of Revolutionary Warfare,” *Small Wars Journal* 27, no.5, 743–776, DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2016.1208287

<sup>2</sup> Richard Dobbs et al., “Urban world: Mapping the economic power of cities,” McKinsey Global Institute, March 2011, <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/urbanization/urban-world-mapping-the-economic-power-of-cities>.



The conduct of counterinsurgency in the megacity environment has become the focus of U.S. military planners and strategists.<sup>3</sup> Concerns over rapid urbanization have become recurrent in military planning documents. It is the emphasis of the 2016 Marine Corps Operating Concept; it is alluded to in the titles of best-selling books such as *Out of the Mountains* by David Kilcullen, and is currently closely researched within the Department of the Army.<sup>4</sup>

Although the implications of modern technology on the battlefield combined with overcrowding of urban areas should be a legitimate concern of internal security forces, an obsession with these trends may have unintended negative consequences. Professor Craig Whiteside's observation at the beginning of this introduction is not a century-old historical reference; it refers to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a social and military wildfire that was ignored in the rural border regions and allowed to smolder before blazing up as one of the region's most dangerous insurgencies. As the United States Government attempts to disengage from fifteen years of central and southwest Asian conflict and shift its focus toward other emerging threats, it is critical that the lessons learned in the hinterlands are not forgotten. In tomorrow's conflict, taking the fight to where the insurgent seeks refuge will likely occur in the mountains, jungles and deserts for control of the villages.

This study begins by defining current statistical trends in global urbanization, highlighting some of the benefits and drawbacks realized by nation states in relation to rapid urbanization and the growth of megacities. In the background chapter, a brief analysis of the evolution of urban-rural relationships highlights Professor Ted Gurr's theory of relative deprivation and its implications on megacity growth.

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<sup>3</sup> Kevin M. Felix and Frederick D. Wong, "Megacities Pros and Cons: The Case for Megacities" *Parameters* 45, no 1, Spring, 2015, [http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Issues/Spring\\_2015/5\\_FelixKevin\\_WongFrederick\\_The%20Case%20for%20Megacities.pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Issues/Spring_2015/5_FelixKevin_WongFrederick_The%20Case%20for%20Megacities.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Chief of Staff of the Army, Strategic Studies Group, Megacities Concept Team, Megacities and the United States Army: Preparing for a Complex and Uncertain Future (Arlington, VA: Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, June 2014).

Chapter II develops a framework to assess historic and contemporary insurgencies in relation to the insurgents' selection of safe havens and operational environments. Four variables identified by RAND Corporation analysts Angel Rabasa and John Peters identify which areas, urban or rural, remain conducive to insurgent or terrorist occupation. Each insurgent organization is further categorized using French counterinsurgent David Galula's strategic insurgent patterns. This framework will be sufficient to consider which future environment, urban, rural or a combination of each should be the focus of military planners and strategists.

The following case studies were chosen after researching which regions of the world held the highest rates of urbanization in addition to a persistent insurgent threat. Chapter III's case of the Communist People's Party – New People's Army (CPP-NPA) properly fit the aforementioned criteria. Chapter IV's case of Lashkar-e-Taiba was selected because of its utilization in David Kilcullen's book *Out of the Mountains*. Absent from my initial findings however was a case in which an insurgency had chosen one of the thirty-four existing megacities as their primary base of operations. For this reason, the final case of the *Front de Libération Nationale* in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 was selected. This allowed for investigation of an urban insurgency in an environment which could be closely paralleled with the modern day megacity slum.

Chapter III presents a contemporary case study analyzing the Philippine megacity of Manila and the Communist People's Party - New People's Army (CPP-NPA). This case was chosen because it allowed for the examination of an insurgency that remains collocated in a nation holding one of the world's largest megacities. The CPP-NPA's history within the Philippines coupled with Manila's ranking on the megacity scale allows for the testing of current hypotheses that the insurgents will come "out of the mountains" and occupy the megacity environment.

Chapter IV examines the Indian megacity of Mumbai, and the insurgent organization Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). This case study was chosen by the strategist David Kilcullen in his book *Out of the Mountains* to underscore his thesis that tomorrow's counterinsurgency battle will occur in the megacity environment. While his analysis detailed the operational aspects of the 2008 attacks in Mumbai, this study will explore

LeT's operational areas and support infrastructure. This case was chosen to help determine whether or not Mumbai will serve as a future battlefield against the LeT or if counterinsurgency will remain primarily a rural struggle.

Chapter V, appraises the historical case study of the *Front de Libération Nationale* in Algeria from 1954 to 1962, to expand both the time and geographic scope of this study. Using the framework established in Chapter II, this case points to parallels between quarters of Algiers and the modern megacity slum. In addition, it allows for analysis of both French and FLN tactics to better understand which variables led to the FLNs overall strategic success, but tactical failure.

Chapter VI summarizes the findings and offers recommendations to counterinsurgency planners and strategists regarding whether or not villages will still matter in tomorrow's counterinsurgency battle. The findings suggest that both historic and contemporary insurgencies have and will continue to rely on ungoverned rural spaces for their safe havens and bases of support. The urban environment is not suitable for exclusive occupation and operations by armed insurgents, but only as a location for supporting elements and the promotion of overt political entities.

## II. BACKGROUND

Demographic shifts and the expansion of urban areas along the littoral regions has become a worldwide phenomenon. Megacities are defined as those cities with an inhabitant population of over 10 million.<sup>5</sup> In 2014 the United Nations reported that there were 28 megacities in the world. In 2016 there were 34 and by the year 2030 the UN estimates that there will be 41.<sup>6</sup> If urbanization continues at this rate, it is estimated that by the year 2030, 80% of the world's population will live in the urban areas.<sup>7</sup>

Africa and Asia bear the highest number of existing megacities as well as the highest rates of urbanization, which continues to accelerate in response to continued rural violence. Conflict in rural South Sudan in the late 1990s is a good example, where the city of Khartoum witnessed a population increase of over 6 million within a few short years.<sup>8</sup>

Along with megacities there is substantial growth within what McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), a leader in global economic trend research, calls “middleweight cities” or “cities with populations of between 150,000 and 10 million.”<sup>9</sup> They acknowledge that while some of these may turn into megacities, the “middleweights” will play a more significant role in the future than the existing megacities themselves.<sup>10</sup> McKinsey Global Institute has found that from a GDP perspective, “407 emerging middleweight cities [are] contributing nearly 40 percent of global growth, more than the entire developed world and emerging-markets megacities combined.”<sup>11</sup> Michael Evans, the former Head of the Australian Army's Land Warfare Studies Center at the Royal Military College, argues

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights,” 2014, 1, <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2014-Highlights.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>7</sup> UN-HABITAT, “The State of the World's Cities Report 2006/2007,” Earthscan, London, UK, 2006, iv.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., iv.

<sup>9</sup> Dobbs et al., “Urban World..”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

that “the point for military strategists to grasp is that, in terms of long-term demographic migration, household size and income distribution, it is the maze of middleweight cities that are poised to be the key urban sites for the next two decades.”<sup>12</sup>

#### **A. BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF MEGACITY GROWTH**

Megacities throughout the world are faced with a host of issues. From sewage management problems to water contamination, to severe overcrowding, the megacities have become a place that was once attractive to the rural population for its high economic potential, but have quickly become overcrowded and nearly uninhabitable. Strategist and counter insurgency expert, Dr. David Kilcullen, highlights many of the issues associated with rapid urban expansion in his book *Out of the Mountains*. He describes Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, as a place where there is “immense strain on governance: fire, ambulance, and health services are over stretched, local government is plagued by corruption and inefficiency, and police units have ceded whole districts to gangs and organized crime.”<sup>13</sup> He points out that in 2012 Dhaka was reported the “least livable city on the planet.”<sup>14</sup> With all of these issues considered, the environment seems ripe for insurgent control.

It would follow that a heavily strained population, limited governance, and a sound narrative for resistance should give insurgents the upper hand in the megacity slums. With conditions so ripe for insurgent control, why haven’t the slums of Dhaka, for example, become safe havens and critical areas of influence for insurgents and their control? Even given these conditions, Ansar Bangla, Bangladesh’s most prevalent counter state threat with ties to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), continues to choose their safe haven within the Satchhari forest, well outside of Dhaka.<sup>15</sup> The reason

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<sup>12</sup> Michael Evans, “Megacities: The Pros and Cons, The Case Against Megacities,” *Parameters* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 36.

<sup>13</sup> David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 234.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Associated Foreign Press, “Huge weapons cache seized in Bangladesh near India’s border,” *Zee News India*, June 3, 2014, [http://zeenews.india.com/news/south-asia/huge-weapons-cache-seized-in-bangladesh-near-indias-border\\_937005.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/south-asia/huge-weapons-cache-seized-in-bangladesh-near-indias-border_937005.html).

may be that the structural conditions of the megacity environment maintain high costs to armed insurgents when compared to the costs associated with rural occupation.<sup>16</sup>

Technology in the world's megacities is on the leading edge and appears to be prevalent even throughout their slums. In the interest of improving communications and productivity throughout the cities, businesses and central governments have taken the Internet into even the poorest areas of Jakarta, Delhi and Mumbai in order for people to access information, coordinate relief efforts and solicit volunteers.<sup>17</sup> With powerlines dangerously strung between buildings of which are on the verge of collapse, one would expect individual priorities to be different than they seem. Almost every home appears to own a satellite dish and amazingly 34% of households within the slums of Mumbai have no toilet, but 63% still own a cellphone.<sup>18</sup> While some argue that this interconnectedness may prove valuable to insurgent operations, the central government may also be using these same technologies to provide oversight into areas less accessible to security forces.

The implications of information technology in the megacity may arguably favor the state in its counterinsurgency efforts. Princeton University Professor Jacob Shapiro and Professor Nils Weidmann at the University of Konstanz in Germany examined the effects on insurgent violence before and after improving cellular communications infrastructure within populated areas of Iraq. Two driving factors gave the state the upper hand, resulting in an overall decrease in violence.<sup>19</sup> The first benefit the state maintained was the ability to exploit signals intelligence for targeting purposes. Shapiro

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<sup>16</sup> Professor Gordon McCormick of the Naval Postgraduate School suggests that insurgents choose their operational environment and the population determines whether to support the insurgent or the state based on a cost benefit analysis. He presents this analysis in the form of the following equation:

$$EV_i = (EB_i - EC_i) - (EB_g - EC_g)$$

or

$$\text{Expected Value}_{\text{insurgency}} = (\text{Expected Benefit}_{\text{insurgency}} - \text{Expected Cost}_{\text{insurgency}}) - (\text{Expected Benefit}_{\text{Government}} - \text{Expected Cost}_{\text{Government}})$$

<sup>17</sup> BT Global Services, "Life in megacities: how technology enables interaction and growth," United Kingdom Telecommunications, October 31 2011, <https://letstalk.globalservices.bt.com/en/2011/10/life-megacities-technology-enables-interaction-growth/>).

<sup>18</sup> Elliot Hannon, "India's Census: Lots of Cellphones, Too Few Toilets." *NPR Online*, April 12, 2012, <http://www.npr.org/2012/04/08/150133880/indias-census-lots-of-cellphones-too-few-toilets>.

<sup>19</sup> Jacob N. Shapiro and Nils B. Weidmann, "Is the Phone Mightier Than the Sword? Cellphones and Insurgent Violence in Iraq" *International Organization* 69, no 2, March 2015, 247–274.

and Weidmann explain that while the targeting aspects were critical, the second, but primary factor causing a reduction in violence was that improved cellular communication “enhances voluntary information flow from noncombatants to counterinsurgents by reducing the risks of informing.”<sup>20</sup> Critical to success however, are the state’s response capabilities. Without a sufficient capability to act or the population’s perception that action will be conducted in response to information provided the state cannot exploit these benefits. However, granting that megacity growth has also created a sufficient reaction capability, cell phones then significantly reduce the potential costs inherited by a civilian choosing to support the central government and increases costs to insurgents for occupying the urban terrain.

Other literature provides a counterargument and proposes that increased Information–Communication Technology (ICT), specifically cell phones, give the insurgent the upper hand, allowing for increased insurgent coordination and the ability to mobilize forces.<sup>21</sup> This research while extremely beneficial to the larger technology debate has been principally focused on *developing* nations. If a developing country lacks or is perceived by the population to lack an effective response capability, tips provided via cell phone may prove ineffective.

## **B. URBAN–RURAL RELATIONSHIP**

The relationship between the urban and rural populations may also be critical to understanding the dynamics of future insurgencies. Throughout history and certainly geographically, there are stark differences in the relationships between the rural and urban populations depending on their unique stage of evolution. While researching the growth of cities within the United States, author and environmental historian William Cronan describes the relationship between the urban and rural zones, stating that “to speak of one without the other made little sense.”<sup>22</sup> In his book *Nature’s Metropolis*,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid..

<sup>21</sup> Camber Warren, “Explosive connections? Mass media, social media, and the geography of collective violence in African states” *Journal of Peace Research*, (February 11, 2015): 12, doi: 10.1177/0022343314558102.

<sup>22</sup> William Cronan, *Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, (W. W. Norton & Company; Reprint edition, 1992), 47.

Cronan explains that as a city grows, concentric circles of surrounding rural populations form that serve a critical role in supporting sustainment of the city.<sup>23</sup> While this may be the case in developing countries, stark differences can be observed in other regions.

Urban-rural relationships throughout Europe have undergone a series of changes which began with the Industrial Revolution. Simin Davoudi, Professor of Environmental Policy and Planning at Newcastle University, explains that prior to industrialization, an urban area may rely heavily on the rural areas for “the consumption of agricultural produce.”<sup>24</sup> However, following an industrial era, the rural populations became reliant on the urban areas for their economic potential.<sup>25</sup> She writes that “today, we seem to be witnessing a third phase whereby the urban-rural linkages are moving beyond the single one-way exchanges and demonstrate a more complex and dynamic web of interdependencies.”<sup>26</sup> Today, these dynamics exist because of the modern efficiencies of international trade, transportation and communications networks, which may be creating both physical and psychological separation between the urban and rural populations.

In those nations where economic growth is largely based in emerging megacities there is growing divergence between the urban and rural populations. BBC journalist Sean Coughman suggests that cities and megacities are becoming the new nation states. Central to his argument is that many of these cities are producing a high percentage of the nation’s GDP and therefore becoming huge powerbrokers in the respective nation’s decision making process. He states that “there are forecasts for even more urbanization, tipping even more of the economic strength into these city states.”<sup>27</sup> Of concern however, is that this concentration of economic development into the cities and not the rural areas may strengthen the insurgent’s ability to highlight dissimilarities and further mobilize rural populations as the *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) insurgents did against

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>24</sup> Simin Davoudi and Dominic Stead, “Urban-Rural Relationships: an introduction and a brief history,” *Built Environment* 28, no. 4 (2002): 269–277, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid..

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>27</sup> Sean Coughlan, “Are cities the new countries?,” *BBC*, January 21, 2016 <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-35305586>.



the Peruvian government. In this case, the Shining Path exploited what Professor Ted Gurr, author on political instability, describes as the theory of relative deprivation.<sup>28</sup>

Professor Gurr's theory of relative deprivation describes a population's degree of satisfaction with one's state stemming from a balance between their perceived value and overall potential when compared to others.<sup>29</sup> Gurr suggests that when individuals of a society conduct this comparison and a change or discrepancy is noticed, one of two feelings is evoked, a sense of innovation or the desire for destruction.<sup>30</sup> In today's case of the megacity–rural zone relationship it may be critical to understand where the lines exist between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” Here the rural zones may perceive that their potential and overall all value to the state is becoming marginalized as the urban population continues to grow in relative strength and prosperity.

This polarization of the urban and rural populations can also be observed in China, the world leader in megacities, where the level of disparity continues to rise between the urban and the rural populations. In 2002, Professor Ding Lu of the National University of Singapore described in the *China Economic Review* his concerns regarding an “urban-biased policy mix.” Lu describes how Chinese policy including restrictions on rural-to-urban migration, inflationary taxes on rural income and less access to education in the rural areas are causing further disparity between the populations.<sup>31</sup> To make matters worse and in attempt to limit the growth of these megacities, the Chinese have maintained a household registration system that denies the rural population the ability to migrate to the urban areas.<sup>32</sup> In this situation, under Gurr's theory of relative deprivation, the decision by the Chinese government would block the rural population's ability to innovate or focus their desire for improvement in a positive manner, further suggesting that the rural population may resort to violence in order to level the perceived dissimilarity.

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<sup>28</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>31</sup> Ding Lu, “Rural–urban income disparity: impact of growth, allocative efficiency, and local growth welfare,” *China Economic Review* 13, 2002, 422.

<sup>32</sup> Lu, “Rural–urban income disparity,” 428.

### III. FRAMEWORK

Global demographic shifts combined with the poor living conditions resulting from rapid megacity growth do not automatically create armed insurgent safe havens or the location of the next counterinsurgency battle. Other critical variables must exist in order for insurgents to determine whether or not an environment will be suitable as an operational area, safe haven, training area or simply as the location of a high pay-off attack. RAND Corporation Analysts Angel Rabasa and John Peters discussed insurgent operational areas exclusively in the paper *Ungoverned Territories: Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks*.<sup>33</sup> Here they argue that four variables must exist in order for an area to be conducive to insurgent occupation. Rabasa and Peters state that “(1) adequacy of infrastructure and operational access, (2) availability of sources of income, (3) favorable demographics, and (4) invisibility” are all required in order for an insurgent organization to successfully occupy space and conduct operations.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to the physical variables required for insurgent occupation of an environment, it is also critical for the counterinsurgent to understand the opposing insurgent’s strategy. U.S. Army counterinsurgency doctrine states that “counterinsurgents have to determine not only their opponents’ motivation but also the approach being used to advance the insurgency.”<sup>35</sup> Bard O’Neill, professor at the National War College in Washington, DC, emphasizes this requirement, stating that “it is especially important to distinguish among forms of warfare because they not only differ in terms of their purposes, targets, activities, and scale of organization but also with regard to the problems they pose for, and the requirements they place on, both sides.”<sup>36</sup> French counterinsurgent, David Galula dedicates a chapter of his book,

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<sup>33</sup> Angel Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories: Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks*, RAND Report MG-561-AF (Santa Monica, CA, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., xvi.

<sup>35</sup> Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency* (FM-3-24), Washington, DC: Headquarters, Dept. of the Army, 2006, 1–5.

<sup>36</sup> O’Neill, Bard E. *Insurgency & Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005), 26.

*Counterinsurgency Warfare* to describing the “strategic patterns” that insurgencies have followed throughout history, implying that a thorough understanding of these patterns will assist the counterinsurgent in developing a logical plan. Although he acknowledges that variation is inevitable, he believes two primary patterns have emerged throughout history: the “Orthodox Pattern” and the “Bourgeois-Nationalist Pattern.”<sup>37</sup>

## **A. INSURGENT STRATEGIES**

Granting that variation from these strategic patterns is inevitable, this research will categorize each insurgent case study into one of Galula’s two identified insurgent patterns. The first pattern he identifies is the “Orthodox Pattern” or “Communist” style of insurgency.<sup>38</sup> Galula states that because this pattern consists of more than just overthrowing a government or occupying power and it focuses on a “complete Communist transformation of the country,” it may be “at best a slow, painstaking process.”<sup>39</sup> He explains that the first step in this pattern is the creation of a Party and the organization of a large united front.<sup>40</sup> The leadership will emerge from students and intellectuals, while the mass base is typically made up of the proletariat and peasant class.<sup>41</sup> Once it has developed the mass base the insurgent organization resorts to guerrilla warfare as it continues to organize, build popular support and military capability. The insurgency, in this pattern attempts movement warfare, where the insurgent’s regular army directly confronts the counterinsurgent, overthrowing the state and assuming political ownership.<sup>42</sup>

Galula’s “Orthodox Pattern” is most often associated with Mao Zedong or Che Guevara, but the emphasis on which environment to operate in, urban or rural, has changed in an almost cyclical manner. Following Mao’s success in 1949, rural based

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<sup>37</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 30–39.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 30–31.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 32–39.

insurgencies seemed to take primacy in the minds of revolutionaries. However, following the death of Che Guevara, during the 1970s and into the 1980s, the idea of the urban guerrilla became extremely popular. Revolutionary author, Abraham Guillen wrote in his book published in 1973, *Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla*, that “the center of operations should never be in the mountains or in the villages, but in the largest cities where the population suffices to form the army of the revolution.”<sup>43</sup> This was short lived as practitioners quickly realized the severe implications of occupying the urban terrain without proper analysis of the state’s capabilities. Professor Anthony Joes of St. Joseph’s University, highlights the results of insurgent decisions to occupy urban environments, stating in his book *Urban Guerrilla Warfare* that “nowhere in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has urban guerrilla warfare achieved an unambiguous success.”<sup>44</sup> It seems that in the modern era however, attention has shifted once again toward the threat of the “urban guerrilla.”

Galula’s second insurgent pattern is the “Bourgeois-Nationalist Pattern” or “Shortcut.” In this pattern, Galula explains that the insurgency skips the first steps associated with the “Orthodox Pattern,” and hopes that blind terrorism will expedite the organization’s objective of gaining popularity.<sup>45</sup> The second step, he states is “selective terrorism,” which will be conducted to “isolate the counterinsurgent from the masses, to involve the population in the struggle, and to obtain as a minimum its passive complicity.”<sup>46</sup> Once the insurgency has gained passive support from the population, it continues mostly in line with the “Orthodox Pattern.” However, one difference requiring emphasis is that the “short-cut” pattern typically places little emphasis on creation of a governing entity.<sup>47</sup> Analysts Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki of RAND Corporation warn in their study *How Insurgencies End* that “broad terror campaigns by insurgents

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<sup>43</sup> Abraham Guillén, *Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla: The Revolutionary Writings of Abraham Guillén* (New York: Morrow, 1973), 237.

<sup>44</sup> Anthony Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 157.

<sup>45</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 39–40.

correlate with insurgent defeat ... qualitative analysis shows that the use of indiscriminate terror often is a sign of overconfidence or, conversely, of weakness.”<sup>48</sup>

## **B. ADEQUACY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL ACCESS**

Rabasa and Peter’s first variable, adequacy of infrastructure and operational access, refers to the insurgent’s ability to use existing transportation, banking and communications infrastructure in order to facilitate operations.<sup>49</sup> They explain that a balance is required where insurgents wish to enjoy the undeveloped areas for their inaccessibility by the state security apparatus, but require a certain level of infrastructure to remain operational.<sup>50</sup> Because this balance is difficult to achieve, case studies discussed in upcoming chapters will demonstrate how support infrastructure is typically not concentrated within one environment, but maintains a balance between both urban and rural, often reaching outside state borders.

When referring to operational access, Rabasa suggests that insurgents must also have “reasonably easy access to terrorists’ desired attack venues.”<sup>51</sup> Although improvements in global transportation and communication have assisted insurgents with extending their operational reach, a balance between the location of their safe haven and their attack location is required in the interest of maintaining a persistent presence.

Terrorist attacks designed to gain attention or build popular support are most often conducted in the urban areas.<sup>52</sup> However, the location of the attack does not necessarily indicate the location of the larger insurgency. By increasing the presence of military forces within the location of the attack, the counterinsurgent may mistakenly play into the insurgent’s strategy. Revolutionary philosopher Regis Debray highlights the importance of a balanced approach from the insurgent perspective, stating that:

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<sup>48</sup> Ben Connable and Martin C Libicki. *How Insurgencies End*, Report MG-965-MCIA, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), xvii.

<sup>49</sup> Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories*, 16.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Donald W. Hamilton, *The Art of Insurgency: American Military Policy and the Failure of Strategy in Southeast Asia* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 31.

City terrorism cannot assume any decisive role, and it entails certain dangers of a political order. But if it is subordinate to the fundamental struggle, the struggle in the countryside, it has, from the military point of view, a strategic value; it immobilizes thousands of enemy soldiers, it ties up most of the repressive mechanism in unrewarding tasks of protection: factories, bridges, electric generators, public buildings, highways, oil pipelines—these can keep busy as much as three quarters of the army.<sup>53</sup>

### C. AVAILABILITY OF INCOME

Availability of income, Rabasa and Peter's second variable, is tantamount to success in most insurgencies. Rabasa and Peters highlight that income is typically either sourced from the trade of commodities (i.e., drugs, oil, human trafficking) or from the taxation of the local population.<sup>54</sup> This can be observed in Afghanistan where the Taliban enjoy virtual control over the Pakistan-Afghan border region. From here they receive income from third-party sponsors as well as proceeds from the opium trade, sale of stolen vehicles and human trafficking to facilitate operations.<sup>55</sup> Of interest are Connable and Libicki's quantitative findings, that "both low income [areas] and low urbanization imply an advantage greater than 2:1 for the insurgent."<sup>56</sup> This may be a result of the insurgent's ability to better leverage control over a population that does not have the means to relocate or escape taxation.

As technology improves and spreads across the globe, even the rural-based insurgency has almost immediate access to a network of funds. Steve Barber of Norwich University states that today's "interconnectedness between these various financing sources ... has the effect of linking 'money, geography, politics, arms, and tactics' to create a devastatingly powerful 'alternative' or 'underground' economy."<sup>57</sup> With these improvements, the rural guerrilla is no longer cut off from the world writ large; he can

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<sup>53</sup> Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution?: Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America* (New York: MR Press, 1967), 75.

<sup>54</sup> Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories*, 17.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ben Connable and Martin C Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 48.

<sup>57</sup> Steve Barber, "The New Economy of Terror: The Financing of Islamist Terrorism," *Global Security Issues* 2, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 3.

maximize the benefits of the ungoverned terrain while effectively sourcing income from around the globe.

#### **D. FAVORABLE DEMOGRAPHICS**

Of all of the named variables, favorable demographics and social characteristics may play the most significant role. Favorable demographics affect an insurgency's ability to utilize existing infrastructure, acquire income and remain invisible while conducting operations. The complexity of the megacity presents unique challenges regarding demographics for both the insurgent and the counterinsurgent. While seemingly disorganized the slums growing along the periphery of existing megacities are in reality highly segregated by socio-ethnic class. Army Officers, Kenneth Neilson and Robert Thomson, state in their Naval Postgraduate School thesis, that "the dynamics that are built within these cultural communities create an atmosphere that is extremely difficult to infiltrate and influence if one is an 'outsider' ... the socio-ethnic differences occurring in these environments create a natural demographic boundary."<sup>58</sup> While extremely difficult for foreign penetration, this boundary may serve in favor of the counterinsurgent. Bard O'Neill, author on insurgency and terrorism, highlights that "where the population is small and concentrated, it is easier for the government to control the people and sever its links with the guerillas. When most of the people live in cities, the situation does not appear as favorable to insurgent movements as when the population is concentrated in the rural areas."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Kenneth Neilson and Robert Thomson, "Strategies for Countering Terrorist Safe Havens (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2013), 13.

<sup>59</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005), 78.

## **E. INVISIBILITY**

The element of invisibility remains critical for insurgent success and may be problematic in the megacity environment. Before continuing, however, it must be acknowledged that invisibility is dependent on the subject state's ability to affect the insurgent should they become visible.<sup>60</sup> Professor Gordon McCormick of the Naval Postgraduate School discusses the variable of "invisibility" at length, highlighting that the insurgent only needs invisibility if the state has the means to affect them. An insurgent finding safe haven across a border or within an ungoverned region for example, may not need to remain invisible if the threatened country does not have the political will or military means to attack.<sup>61</sup> While the megacity may provide significant infrastructure for exploitation by insurgents, the ability to move men, weapons and equipment in a manner that is unseen or "invisible" remains much more difficult. In the 1970s Che Guevara cautioned future guerrillas that while the benefits of the urban terrain may be great, he warned that "the risks and consequences of exposure are tremendous."<sup>62</sup>

## **F. CONCLUSION**

Research suggests that insurgent organizations around the globe choose operational areas on the basis of a few variables. Critical to the insurgent's selection of an operational environment are the need for infrastructure, sources of income, favorable demographics and invisibility.<sup>63</sup> In addition, the insurgent strategy of the leadership or sponsor must also be considered. While the list of variables described is not exhaustive, they provide a framework to examine both historical and contemporary insurgencies in relation to the megacity environment. This will help counterinsurgency strategists determine under what conditions the next counterinsurgency battle will be fought.

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<sup>60</sup> Gordon McCormick, "Guerilla Warfare" (Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, October 13, 2015).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ernesto Guevara, *Che Guevara On Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Praeger, 1961), 28.

<sup>63</sup> Rabasa et al., *Ungoverned Territories*, 16.



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#### **IV. CASE STUDY #1—NEW PEOPLE’S ARMY, MANILA, PHILIPPINES**

Growing in the periphery of Manila’s megacity environment, as of 2016, the Communist People’s Party – New People’s Army (CPP-NPA) shows no sign of shifting its insurgent strategy into the megacity. An aggregate of the following evidence suggests that Manila’s urban environment does not serve as suitable for long-term occupation of armed insurgents, rather primarily for the promotion of its political entities and as a stage for potential high profile attacks. The existing security apparatus of Manila coupled with its social structure make the environment inhospitable to the “urban guerilla.” Additionally, the CPP-NPA’s insurgent strategy and exploitation of the ungoverned rural areas have allowed them access to infrastructure, income, and the favorable demographics required to sustain operations, all without risking exclusive occupation of the urban environment.

##### **A. ORGANIZATION OF MANILA**

In 2016, Manila, the capital of the Philippines, was ranked the fifth largest urban area in the world.<sup>64</sup> Metro Manila bears a population of approximately 24 million and is increasing at a rate of 1.7 percent each year.<sup>65</sup> The result of this rapid urban growth has made Manila one of the most densely populated cities on the planet.<sup>66</sup>

Located on the western edge of the island of Luzon, Manila is archetypal of the “average” megacity. Its developed urban core remains dwarfed in relation to the vast expanse of slums. At first glance, the conglomeration of shanty towns throughout Manila appear to be highly disorganized, but are in reality broken down into smaller settlements. These settlements are populated mostly by rural migrants with shared ethnic origin or

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<sup>64</sup> Demographia, “World Urban Areas,” April 2016, retrieved from <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, “World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights,” 2014, 26, <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2014-Highlights.pdf>.

<sup>66</sup> Nick Carbone, “The 10 Fastest-Growing Cities of Tomorrow,” TIME, October 26, 2011, [http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2097720\\_2097718\\_2097716,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2097720_2097718_2097716,00.html).

linguistic background and acceptance into them is largely dependent on their shared identity.<sup>67</sup>

Just above the informal social organization of the settlement is Manila's smallest form of organized government, known as the *barangay*.<sup>68</sup> There are over one thousand barangays in Manila, each of which possesses its own elected leader and formal council. This traditional form of governance emphasizes the empowerment of local elders and has underpinned central government access. The barangays possess a unique form of conflict resolution known as the Barangay Justice System, recognized as lawful by the national government.<sup>69</sup> This system has proven to be an effective form of decentralized, local dispute resolution and remains a critical element toward thwarting insurgent occupation. Former U.S. Air Force Officer and adviser at Colorado College, Joseph Derdzinski describes the benefits of this informal organization, stating that "one net result is that most urban settlements are relatively closed communities. An outside settler would be noticed fairly quickly and may be reluctant to settle in a community where he has no logical filial connection."<sup>70</sup>

## **B. PROBLEMS WITH GROWTH IN MANILA**

Manila has no shortage of problems. Analogous to other megacities, Manila has attracted a significant population of poor rural citizens, all of whom hope to benefit from the city's economic growth. This rate of urbanization, which now has almost 50% of the Philippine population living in cities,<sup>71</sup> has also created a network of slums leaving Manila plagued with corruption and extremely vulnerable to disease and natural disaster.

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<sup>67</sup> Joseph L. Derdzinski, "Rapid Urban Settlement, Violence, and the Democratizing State: Toward an Understanding?," 2006, 7, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a540748.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> "Barangay" is the Filipino term for village and is the lowest level of administrative division within the Philippines.

<sup>69</sup> "Republic Act 7160, otherwise known as the 1991 Local Government Code, gives barangays the mandate to enforce peace and order and provide support for the effective enforcement of human rights and justice." –Katarungang Pambarangay: A Handbook, Maricel Vigo et al.

<sup>70</sup> Derdzinski, "Rapid Urban Settlement," 8.

<sup>71</sup> The World Bank, "Urban Population (% of Total)," accessed October 24, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS>.

One example among many is Manila's struggle with solid waste management. Every day, 1100 tons of human and solid waste is released into the city's waterways, causing significant flooding and contamination issues.<sup>72</sup> These issues are only compounded by the approximately 20 typhoons that hit the Philippines each year, further propagating huge migrations of homeless and displaced people into the city.<sup>73</sup> This coupled with income disparity being the highest of the Asian countries; one would assume that the urban environment would remain ripe for insurgent control.<sup>74</sup>

### C. BENEFITS OF GROWTH IN MANILA

While the rapid urbanization of Manila may have created significant problems along its periphery, the benefits of its economic prosperity should also be considered. President Rodrigo Duterte has continued to focus much of the Philippines' economic growth on healthcare, education and structural reform, all of which he hopes will have a significant effect on reducing poverty. In 2015, the World Bank stated that "sustaining this level of high growth and making it inclusive over the long term will enable the country to eradicate poverty and boost shared prosperity within a generation."<sup>75</sup>

In addition to refocusing government programs on improving the social welfare of its inhabitants, Manila's rapid economic growth has allowed for the creation of a sufficient security apparatus. Although corruption and historical distrust between the Philippine Army and the police continues to strain their relationship, the United States Army Special Forces has made significant progress building capability within the Filipino ranks. In 2013, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) came out from its rural bases and attempted to sack the city of Zamboanga. In reaction, the Philippine

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<sup>72</sup> Lilia Raflones and Ram Regmi, "Understanding the Water and Urban Environment of a Megacity: The Case of Metro Manila, Philippines," United Nations University no. 2 (April 2015): 3.

<sup>73</sup> Charmie Joy Pagulong, "8 of 10 most at risk from natural disasters located in Phl – Study" *The Philippine Star Online*, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>74</sup> Jillian Keenan, "The Grim Reality Behind the Philippines' Economic Growth" *The Atlantic*, May 7, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/05/the-grim-reality-behind-the-philippines-economic-growth/275597/>.

<sup>75</sup> The World Bank, "Philippines: High and Inclusive Growth Can Eradicate Poverty and Boost Shared Prosperity within a Generation," January 14, 2015, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/01/13/philippines-high-and-inclusive-growth-can-eradicate-poverty-and-boost-shared-prosperity-within-a-generation>.

Police Special Action Force alongside the Army Light Reaction Regiment or “Army Rangers,” effectively eliminated the threat and returned the city’s control back to its local police.<sup>76</sup>

However, the MNLF only serves as one of many counter-state threats. Re-establishing itself in the shadows of India’s economic expansion is the Communist People’s Party – New People’s Army, which continues to develop throughout the Philippines vast rural regions.

Adhering to its communist roots, the CPP-NPA has followed the orthodox pattern of insurgency. It has created a party base from the rural peasantry, attempted to subvert social order to promote political struggles and continues to build a guerrilla force intent on surrounding the urban areas before attempting a ‘war of movement.’<sup>77</sup>

Throughout the 1980s, the CPP-NPA attempted an urban approach in both the city of Davao and Manila. Foreign policy author F.A. Mediansky wrote in 1986, that “Davao [had] reportedly become the NPA laboratory for urban insurgency, with the aim of building up experience and tactical doctrine which [could] be applied in other cities.”<sup>78</sup> This was short lived however, as the NPA quickly realized the structural problems associated with operating in the urban environment. With little to no outside state sponsorship at the time and Manila’s wealthiest population departing the city to avoid taxation by insurgents, the NPA’s effectiveness dried up as they were forced back into the surrounding villages to reconsolidate.

Instead, the CPP-NPA now focuses much of its effort on controlling the ungoverned villages scattered throughout the rural areas. The CPP-NPA has deliberately expanded its influence in these areas through the use of armed mobile propaganda units called *Sandatahang Yunit Pamporpanda* (SYPs) and as of 2006, has penetrated 70 of the

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<sup>76</sup> Alan Taylor, “Bloody Philippine Siege Brought to an End” *The Atlantic*, Sep 30, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2013/09/bloody-philippine-siege-brought-to-an-end/100599/>.

<sup>77</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 30.

<sup>78</sup> Fedor A. Mediansky, “The New People’s Army: A Nation-wide Insurgency in the Philippines,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 8, No. 1 (June 1986), 4.

79 Philippine provinces.<sup>79</sup> Once established in these provinces and villages, the CPP-NPA capitalizes on perceived relative deprivation to build a base of support by providing those services not delivered by the central government. By building rural bases and opening schools the CPP-NPA are indoctrinating young children into the communist mindset, leaving the country yet another generation of state resistance.

## **D. COMMUNIST PEOPLE’S PARTY – NEW PEOPLE’S ARMY**

### **1. Insurgent Strategy**

The Communist People’s Party (CPP) and its armed or guerrilla faction, the New People’s Army (NPA), were founded on Mao Zedong’s birthday in 1968 by Jose Maria Sison, a prominent activist and member of the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* or PKP.<sup>80</sup> Underpinning the CPP-NPA’s ideology is to overthrow the Philippine Government, expel the United States from the region and build a new democratic government under the leadership of the working class.

The CPP-NPA’s size has fluctuated throughout history as they have moved back and forth between phases of insurgency. At its formation, the NPA-CPP consisted of only sixty combatants and a handful of leftist students, but quickly gained support growing to over twenty-five thousand in the mid-1980s.<sup>81</sup> In 2015 while on the strategic defensive, the NPA-CPP strength was estimated at 4,443 active members and continues to pose a significant threat to the Philippine government.<sup>82</sup>

### **2. Infrastructure and Operational Access**

While aspects of Manila’s urban infrastructure have proven suitable for resistance elements, evidence suggests that the CPP-NPA is far from shifting toward a strategy of

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<sup>79</sup> Soliman M. Santos, Jr. and Paz Verdades M. Santos, “Primed and Purposeful: Armed Groups and Human Security Efforts in the Philippines,” (Small Arms Survey, Geneva, 2010), 269.

<sup>80</sup> Institute for International Studies, “Mapping Militant Organizations: Communist Party of the Philippines–New People’s Army” *Stanford University*, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/149#note113>.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Chiara Zambrano, “AFP releases conflicting figures on NPA rebels’ strength,” Jul 04 2015, <http://news.abs-cbn.com/nation/07/03/15/afp-releases-conflicting-figures-npa-rebels-strength>.

armed urban insurgency. As Debray suggested in 1967, they have kept the urban segments “subordinate to the fundamental struggle, the struggle in the countryside.”<sup>83</sup>

The maze of congested streets, flurry of tricycles and crowded *jeepneys*<sup>84</sup> proves to be beneficial for the NPA’s access to attack venues, but makes long-term occupation much more difficult. The social structure of Manila only allows small pockets of safe havens, and the dense population provides a significant number of police informants to quickly reveal the insurgents’ locations.<sup>85</sup> Derdzinski states that “instead of using the squatter settlements for preoperational planning, the tendency is for them to use the motels and pension houses that are more common in the established, older settlement areas ... [those] family-owned establishments that shun electronic payments and, in return for cash, provide some anonymity for the residents.”<sup>86</sup> Although these establishments provide a level of secrecy, the insurgent’s proverbial clock begins ticking as soon as they occupy.

### **3. Sources of Income**

By coupling the benefits of the resource-rich rural environment with the Philippines’ strong international trade infrastructure, the CPP-NPA has no shortage of income. After 1976, material and financial support from China had diminished and the CPP-NPA was forced to resort to other forms of fundraising.<sup>87</sup> Today, in addition to support from global front companies, the organization’s primary source of income comes from ‘revolutionary taxes’ and ‘permits to campaign, most of which is sourced from the rural environment.’<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution?: Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America* (New York: MR Press, 1967), 75.

<sup>84</sup> *Jeepneys* are the Philippines most prominent method of public transportation and are typically constructed from old jeeps with a modified extended cab to hold its passengers.

<sup>85</sup> Derdzinski, “Rapid Urban Settlement,” 12.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Institute for International Studies, “Mapping Militant Organizations: Communist Party of the Philippines–New People’s Army” *Stanford University*, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/149#note113>.

<sup>88</sup> Santos and Santos, “Primed and Purposeful Armed Groups,” 266.

In 2011, the ungoverned rural zones of the Philippines produced \$6.2 billion USD in natural resources, accounting for 2.8% of the Philippine GDP.<sup>89</sup> These areas however, are becoming relatively less important to the central government when compared to Manila's contribution, which makes up for 37.2% of the nation's GDP.<sup>90</sup> While diminishing in importance to the central government, these reserves of metals such as copper, chromite and gold provided the CPP-NPA with USD \$450,000 per month or USD \$5.4 million dollars annually in 'revolutionary taxes' from a single province.<sup>91</sup>

#### **4. Favorable Demographics**

One benefit of the CPP-NPA's revolutionary approach is that they do not select their members based on religion, sex, age or ethnic background. With a nationalist ideology rather than ethnic identity, guerrillas enjoy anonymity amongst not one demographic, but from the labyrinth of people transiting throughout Manila. This proves beneficial to the guerrilla when moving across the urban environment, but still presents difficulties for long-term armed occupation.

The familial boundaries throughout the slums have created a natural social structure which has made invisibility much more difficult. Instead, the CPP has resorted to using the demographics of the urban environment mostly for limited duration kinetic activity<sup>92</sup> and the recruitment of future cadre from urban educational institutions.<sup>93</sup>

In the rural areas and villages, however, NPA guerrillas have many factors in their favor. Even though the tribal dispute resolution process remains similar, the central government has little access in these rugged areas which has left the villages vulnerable

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<sup>89</sup> Calculations were conducted using the World Bank's most recent(2011) estimate of total natural resources (% of GDP) multiplied by its 2011 total GDP.

<sup>90</sup> Benjamin de la Peña, "No, Mareng Winnie, Metro Manila is not the 'paborito'; it is the 'tagasalo,'" *InterAksyon News Online*, January 19, 2015, <http://www.interaksyon.com/business/103332/benjamin-de-la-pena-no-mareng-winnie-metro-manila-is-not-the-paborito-it-is-the-tagasalo>.

<sup>91</sup> Greg Macabenta, "Duterte and the CPP-NPA protection racket," *Asian Journal*, June 25 2016, <http://asianjournal.com/editorial/duterte-and-the-cpp-npa-protection-racket/>.

<sup>92</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003," 24 October 2016, [www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2003/](http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2003/).

<sup>93</sup> Francis Doming, "Explaining the Sustainability of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army" *Small Wars Journal*, October, 4 2013,5-6, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/explaining-the-sustainability-of-the-communist-party-of-the-philippines-new-people%E2%80%99s-army>.



to CPP-NPA control.<sup>94</sup> Here the CPP-NPA rarely resorts to fear based tactics for recruitment activities, but capitalizes on relative deprivation between the urban and rural populations. The CPP-NPA highlights shared economic disparity, unresolved land disputes and the central government's lack of economic inclusion to build their base of support.

## **5. Invisibility**

The villages scattered throughout the mountainous hinterlands have provided the NPA a sufficient level of invisibility. By splitting the organization into smaller elements, implementing strict operational security measures and extensively screening each recruit, the CPP-NPA has successfully remained “invisible” to government forces and avoided rural counterinsurgent efforts. Assistant Professor Francis Domingo of De La Salle University states that in the rural areas “the support of the masses transforms into a vital reserve of manpower and logistics for guerrilla forces, an effective communication system between commands, superior combat intelligence network that enables the CPP-NPA to prepare for potential attacks and most importantly, a ‘screen’ that denies government security forces from gathering intelligence on the CPP-NPA’s capabilities and intentions.”<sup>95</sup> Given these favorable conditions, the CPP-NPA shows no need to risk armed occupation of the megacity and continues to “[maintain] a limited presence in key cities around the Philippines.”<sup>96</sup>

When the CPP-NPA does enter the urban environment, the organization restricts its armed activities to limited duration strikes such as assassinations or kidnappings before seeking safe havens outside the city. These kidnapping and assassination teams, known as “sparrow teams”<sup>97</sup> allow the CPP-NPA the ability to exploit the publicity

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<sup>94</sup> Doming, “Explaining the Sustainability of the Communist Party of the Philippines,” 4.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. ,5.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Institute for International Studies, “Mapping Militant Organizations: Communist Party of the Philippines–New People’s Army” *Stanford University*, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/149#note113>.

advantages associated with the city while enjoying the safety of the rural environment for its level of security and operational support.

## **E. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the midst of a rapidly urbanizing Philippines, and even with almost 50% of the Filipino population now living in cities, the CPP-NPA shows little sign of shifting toward an urban form of insurgency. The CPP-NPA has previously attempted urban initiatives and learned from the structural drawbacks associated armed urban occupation. More likely is that the CPP-NPA will continue to use the urban environment as a supporting effort for recruitment activities, maintenance of non-violent political parties as well as a stage for high-profile attacks. While on the strategic defensive, the CPP-NPA will likely continue to rebuild its rural support base, exploiting ungoverned mining resources for financial gain while using peace-talks as a temporary shield to facilitate further build-up and organizational efforts.

From a counterinsurgency strategy perspective, it will be critical that the U.S. Armed Forces continue its partnership with Philippine security forces, emphasizing access into the rural environment and the extension of government resources to those outside the megacity sphere of influence. Reinforcing the security apparatus in regions of high natural resource production will reduce CPP-NPA income, attract corporate mining industries that have since departed due to insurgent taxation and assist in promoting a more positive urban-rural zone relationship.

In order to facilitate security within Manila, government entities should focus on three tasks. First, partnership and interoperability within Manila's police forces will be critical as militarization of the megacity environment may have a limited effect on CPP-NPA fundraising, training, or rural growth. Second, improving host nation intelligence collection within the city will limit insurgent access to vulnerable, underprivileged settlements and will limit the impression of an over excessive central government presence. Continued efforts to make economic growth inclusive throughout the country will pay long-term security dividends. Improving national infrastructure throughout the

Philippines will limit the CPP-NPAs ability to exploit elements of relative deprivation and may further improve relationships between urban and rural populations.

## **V. CASE STUDY #2—LASHKAR-E-TAIBA, MUMBAI, INDIA**

The 2008 attacks in Mumbai, India, are described in detail by author and strategist David Kilcullen, intending to support his prediction that future counterinsurgencies will be fought in the megacity environment.<sup>98</sup> Although Mumbai serves as home to a significant level of organized crime, poverty and a maze of urban sprawl, the urban environment there is not preferable for the long-term occupation of armed insurgents.

Mumbai's robust financial growth has allowed for the creation of a sufficient security apparatus. Although it has allowed for periodic attacks, Indian security forces have proven extremely effective in thwarting insurgent occupation of the urban environment. Finally, with a safe haven provided behind the borders of Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Taiba enjoys all of the variables required to source its insurgent operations. Abandoning its current safe haven for urban Mumbai may place the LeT or other revolutionaries at a structural disadvantage.

### **A. ORGANIZATION OF MUMBAI**

In 2016, Mumbai was rated the sixth largest megacity in world.<sup>99</sup> Located on the western shores of India along the Arabian Sea, greater Mumbai counts a population of over 22,885,000 and serves as the country's commercial and economic capital.<sup>100</sup> While Mumbai continues to be the economic powerhouse for the nation, the city possesses the same benefits and drawbacks of its megacity brethren.

### **B. PROBLEMS WITH GROWTH IN MUMBAI**

Population growth and poor urban planning have plagued Mumbai with a number of significant issues. Beginning as a fishing village and then becoming a significant hub for international trade under British control in the 1800s, the focus of Mumbai's growth

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<sup>98</sup>David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>99</sup> Demographia, "World Urban Areas," *12th Annual Edition – 2016*, 19, retrieved from <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf>.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

remained largely concentrated on its urban core. The fringes of Mumbai, immediately outside its super rich financial districts, have become besieged with overpopulated slums, occupied by those seeking a sliver of Mumbai's economic prospect.

Most notable is Mumbai's "Dharavi" slum, the setting for the 2008 film *Slumdog Millionaire*, and is often referred to as the world's largest slum.<sup>101</sup> Dharavi, which has existed since the British colonial era, has a population of 1 million or 18,000 people per acre.<sup>102</sup>

As Indian agriculture wanes in the shadow of commercial industry, the Dharavi slum continues to attract large numbers of poor, rural, Hindu and Muslim migrants. In 2007, *The Economist* explained the continued rural flight into Mumbai stating that "their only hope is to move to the cities. It is an echo of what happened in medieval Europe, when moving to a city was for many an escape from serfdom. *Stadtluft macht frei* (City air sets you free), said the Germans."<sup>103</sup> This steady flow of illegal settlers have created an extremely diverse population of which are subjected to some of the worst conditions imaginable.

It is estimated that within a single block there are only 15–20 toilets and water is only obtained during set times from a select few spigots.<sup>104</sup> This lack of sanitation infrastructure has further propagated health complications among its citizens and would seem to serve as a critical vulnerability for insurgent exploitation of relative deprivation. The question remains however, why has the Dharavi slum not, in the center of Mumbai, become an insurgent base for resistance as some late strategists conspire?

In addition to health and sanitation issues, Mumbai is rife with organized crime. Shankar Pratap Singh of the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute outlines the *modus operandi* of these criminal organizations, stating that "they are engaged in such

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<sup>101</sup> Mark Jacobson, "Dharavi: Mumbai's Shadow City," *National Geographic*, 211, 5, (2007), 71.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> "The strange allure of the slums: People prefer urban squalor to rural hopelessness." *The Economist*. May 3, 2007. [http://www.economist.com/node/9070714/print?story\\_id=9070714](http://www.economist.com/node/9070714/print?story_id=9070714).

<sup>104</sup> Kendsie Hunter et al., "Sanitation in Dharavi Slums," *Prezi.*, accessed October 5, 2016., <https://prezi.com/qhnedibcdfgo/sanitation-in-dharavi-slums/>

felonious activities as illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, the use of violence and extortion, acts of corruption, trafficking in women and children, illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, environmental crime, credit card fraud, computer related crime, illegal trafficking of stolen vehicles, industrial espionage and sabotage, maritime piracy, etc.”<sup>105</sup> Missing from their intentions is their desire to overthrow the Indian government. Singh goes on to state that “the purpose of organized crime in India, as elsewhere in the world, is monetary gain and this is what makes it a formidable force in today’s socio-political set up.”<sup>106</sup> With these goals in mind, the gangs of Mumbai choose to operate at a level that remains under the Indian government’s allowable threshold of violence. Where an insurgency often times intends to provoke government response, violence conducted by criminal organizations only reinforces its tactical aims, often times without provoking state retaliation.

### **C. BENEFITS OF GROWTH IN MUMBAI**

India’s economic growth and stability has thwarted insurgent occupation of its cities, specifically Mumbai. As Professor David Satterthwaite and colleagues at the London School of Economics points out, “many development professionals see urbanization as a problem. Yet, no nation has prospered without urbanization and there is no prosperous nation that is not predominantly urban.”<sup>107</sup> Although Satterthwaite highlights this in his research on the implications of urbanization on food production, the same holds true for the development of India’s security apparatus.

Since 2013, India has been on its way to having one of the four largest militaries in the world.<sup>108</sup> In addition to its 1.3 million man army, India has created a number of para-military and special police forces to address its internal threats. Of note is the

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<sup>105</sup> Shankar Pratap Singh, “Transnational Organized Crime: The Indian Perspective” (From UNAFEI Annual Report for 2000 and Resource Material Series No. 59: 570, 2002, [http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/RS\\_No59/No59\\_38PA\\_Singh.pdf](http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/RS_No59/No59_38PA_Singh.pdf)..

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> David Satterthwaite et al. “Urbanization and its implications for food and farming.” *The Royal Society*, <http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/royptb/365/1554/2809.full.pdf>, 2810.

<sup>108</sup> “Know your own strength” *The Economist*, March 30, 2013, <http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21574458-india-poised-become-one-four-largest-military-powers-world-end>.

National Security Guards, a 7,500-man elite anti-terrorist contingency force that has been tasked with internal security as its core mission. Creating forces such as the National Security Guards has allowed the Indian military to focus primarily on external threats propagated from the Kashmir region and leave the police and other security forces to focus on its internal threats. Christine Fair of the RAND Corporation states that “India has promulgated a number of these paramilitary forces to shield the Indian army from ‘aid to civil operations’ and to minimize the involvement of the army in law enforcement.”<sup>109</sup> While this structure has not eliminated the insurgent threat throughout the country, especially in the Kashmir region, it has proven to be effective in limiting insurgent occupation of the urban environment.

During instances where insurgents attempted to hold ground within an Indian city, Indian security forces were successful in using traditional cordon-and-search methods to root them out. Fair describes the success of these tactics during Operation Bluestar, where Indian security forces fought a growing insurgency within the city of Srinagar:

The typical operation would begin between 3:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. when BSF troops (typically in battalion strength) cordoned off an area. At 6:00 a.m. the troops would call out the males, assemble them in a large area (e.g., a sports ground, a mosque compound, or a street), and segregate them by age. Identification parades would take place throughout the morning and afternoon and each typically involved parading the male population one by one before a hooded informant ... The Indians’ ability to break the back of the militancy in Srinagar, “the nerve center” of the revolt in 1989–1992, is attributed to these unrelenting cordon-and-search operations.<sup>110</sup>

However, in 2008 a series of attacks in Mumbai brought into question whether or not the future safe havens of armed insurgents would be in the megacity.

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<sup>109</sup> Christine C. Fair “Military Operations in Urban Areas: The Indian Experience.” *India Review* September 08 2010. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/714002323>, 55.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

## **D. LASHKAR-E-TAIBA**

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008 members of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) moved from their bases in Pakistan into the streets of Mumbai to conduct an attack that remains in the memory of most Indians, as 9/11 is to most Americans. While the attack may have been conducted in order to “maximize publicity,”<sup>111</sup> it supported the LeT’s goal of asserting control over the disputed Kashmir region, with long-term hopes of establishing an Islamic Caliphate throughout India.<sup>112</sup>

### **1. Insurgent Strategy**

Lashkar-e-Taiba is a violent extremist Sunni organization that follows the Ahle-Hadith interpretation of Islam, aligns some of its goals with the government of Pakistan and in 2001 was designated by the U.S. State Department as a terrorist organization.<sup>113</sup> While LeT appears to follow elements of Galula’s definition of a “Bourgeois-Nationalist Pattern” insurgency, their strong organizational backing diverges them slightly from the given construct. Galula describes this pattern as typically consisting of “a small group of men, with no broad organization to back them.” Although LeT maintains a strong organizational backing, their strategy and lack of post conflict preparation more closely follows the definition. Galula describes that “the goal of the insurgent in this case is generally limited to the seizure of power; post insurgency problems, as secondary preoccupations, are shelved for the time being.”<sup>114</sup> Granting this deviation, LeT uses “random terrorism, bombings, arson, assassinations, conducted in as spectacular a fashion as possible, by concentrated, coordinated, and synchronized waves.”<sup>115</sup> Although LeT maintains a strong organizational backing, its tactics are precisely in suit with Galula’s definition. While the attacks in Mumbai in 2008 and again in 2011 appeared to be

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<sup>111</sup> David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 63.

<sup>112</sup> Institute for International Studies, “Mapping Militant Organizations: Lashkar-e-Taiba” *Stanford University*, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/79>.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid..

<sup>114</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid..



merely blind terrorism, they were all done with the intent to “focus attention and attract latent support.”<sup>116</sup>

## **2. Infrastructure and Operational Access**

Lashkar-e-Taiba maintains a multi-faceted and effective support infrastructure. Although the LeT headquarters is located outside of Lahore, Pakistan, it occupies much of the ungoverned rural areas of Mohmand and Bajaur Agency as well. Here they have developed training areas, madrassas, schools and recruiting stations which serve as a base of support to launch continued attacks against India and Afghanistan.<sup>117</sup> In 2008, while planning for the Mumbai attacks, Zarrar Shah, the LeT’s chief computer expert first sought safe haven in the northern mountains of Pakistan before moving to his temporary urban safe house.<sup>118</sup>

With their primary operational area and support infrastructure within the borders of Pakistan, and the urban terrain of Mumbai being unsuitable and unnecessary for long-term armed occupation, the LeT’s only hurdle was access to their desired attack objective. Bill Roggio, an editor for *The Long War Journal* stated that “the Mumbai attack is something different ... one of the more intriguing aspects of the attack is how the teams entered Mumbai.”<sup>119</sup> Careful planning supported by non-violent, urban-based entities and the exploitation of Mumbai’s poorly secured fishing port coupled with the LeT’s use of technology to support communication allowed its guerrillas almost seamless access to its targets.

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<sup>116</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 39.

<sup>117</sup> Stephen Tankel, “Lashkar-e-Taiba in Perspective: An Evolving Threat” *New America Foundation*, February 2010, 2, [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Lashkar-e-Taiba\\_in\\_Perspective.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Lashkar-e-Taiba_in_Perspective.pdf).

<sup>118</sup> James Glanz et al. “In 2008 Mumbai Attacks, Piles of Spy Data, but an Uncompleted Puzzle” *New York Times*, December 21, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/22/world/asia/in-2008-mumbai-attacks-piles-of-spy-data-but-an-uncompleted-puzzle.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/22/world/asia/in-2008-mumbai-attacks-piles-of-spy-data-but-an-uncompleted-puzzle.html?_r=1).

<sup>119</sup> Bill Roggio, “Analysis: Mumbai attack differs from past terror strikes,” *The Long War Journal*, November 28, 2008, [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/11/analysis\\_mumbai\\_atta.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/11/analysis_mumbai_atta.php).

### 3. Sources of Income

Lashkar-e-Taiba maintains a plethora of fundraising activities and enjoys no shortage of income. It is estimated that LeT's annual budget is over \$50 million.<sup>120</sup> Boston University Professor Jessica Stern even suggests that the LeT's income has reached such a level that the organization has considered opening its own bank.<sup>121</sup>

Fundraising activities such as proceeds from legitimate businesses, collection of Islamic taxes and income from hospitals, schools and medical facilities only account for a portion of the funds collected by LeT.<sup>122</sup> Ryan Clarke, an analyst of the Strategic Studies Institute reports that "in addition to soliciting donations from charities, non-governmental organizations, and overseas Pakistanis, LeT has branched out and diversified its sources of funding, thus making its financial pipeline less vulnerable to a decapitating strike."<sup>123</sup>

Adding to the complexity of LeT's financial infrastructure, Stanford University's Institute for International Studies illuminates Pakistan's current relationship with LeT, stating that "in addition to ISI support, LeT also receives funds from the Pakistani civilian government. This money is usually directed through LeT-run schools and hospitals."<sup>124</sup>

### 4. Favorable Demographics

One difficulty Lashkar-e-Taiba faces with basing in Mumbai as well as other Indian cities is its demographics. In 2011, the Indian census reported that India's population was 14.23% Muslim, a distant second to the Hindu majority of 79.80%.<sup>125</sup> While this population of Muslim inhabitants allows the LeT access to a select few urban

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<sup>120</sup> Geoffrey Kambere et al. "The Financing of Lashkar-e-Taiba" *CTX Journal* 1 no. 1, (2011), [https://globalecco.org/ctx-v1n1/lashkar-e-taiba#\\_ftnref61](https://globalecco.org/ctx-v1n1/lashkar-e-taiba#_ftnref61).

<sup>121</sup> Ryan Clarke, "Lashkar-I-Taiba: The Fallacy of Subservient Proxies and the Future of Islamist Terrorism in India" *Strategic Studies Institute*, (March, 2010): 27, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub973.pdf>.

<sup>122</sup> Institute for International Studies, "Mapping Militant Organizations: Lashkar-e-Taiba" *Stanford University*, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/79>.

<sup>123</sup> Clarke, "Lashkar-I-Taiba," 27.

<sup>124</sup> Institute for International Studies, "Mapping Militant Organizations: Lashkar-e-Taiba." In 2002, the Pakistan government designated Lashkar-e-Taiba as a terrorist organization.

<sup>125</sup> "Religion Census 2011," *Census 2011*, August 5, 2016, <http://www.census2011.co.in/religion.php>.

sympathizers, religious faith alone does not allow for long term insurgent occupation of the cities. RAND Corporation's Christine Fair provides insight on the restrictions that LeT has experienced with urban insurgency in the Kashmir. She states:

Another concurrent factor contributing to this movement to the rural terrain is the increasing presence of "guest militants" from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Arab countries, and elsewhere. These infiltrators have become more prominent in the insurgency from the early 1990s onward. They do not speak Kashmiri and have different habits of dress and appearance, thus they do not blend in with the Kashmiri population ... consequently they find it easier to operate in more isolated areas than in Srinagar, where they may be easily identified and targeted.<sup>126</sup>

## **5. Invisibility**

Lashkar-e-Taiba and its assault on Mumbai in 2008 exemplify an insurgency that only needs to remain invisible until the conduct of its attacks. By occupying terrain that remains outside the military or political will of its adversary, the organization can operate freely without fear of attack.<sup>127</sup> Here the LeT enjoyed relative freedom to plan, train and rehearse the execution of its attack in Mumbai, only leaving a sliver of its members vulnerable during the execution. U.S., British and Indian intelligence reportedly compromised elements of Zarrar Shah's electronic signature, but due to his geographic location and an inability to properly coordinate between government agencies, the operation went forward unimpeded.<sup>128</sup>

## **E. SUMMARY-RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mumbai's urban environment is not suitable for long-term basing by armed insurgents. Although organized crime runs rampant throughout the city, the stark difference in criminal tactics and desired end state when compared to the LeT, make the latter less suitable for persistent armed occupation. Urban elements however may

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<sup>126</sup> Christine C. Fair, "Military Operations in Urban Areas: The Indian Experience," *India Review* 2, no. 1 (September 08 2010): 63. DOI:10.1080/714002323

<sup>127</sup> Gordon McCormick, "Guerilla Warfare" (Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, October 13, 2015).

<sup>128</sup> Glanz et al., "In 2008 Mumbai Attacks."

continue to support limited duration, high profile attacks or non-violent supporting efforts in the form of financial support or reconnaissance elements.

The 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba attack in Mumbai was not an example of a growing urban insurgency, but rather the sign of a rural insurgency that exploited vulnerabilities of the urban terrain to support a high profile attack. The root of the insurgency was not directly associated to the complexity of Mumbai or even the exploitable attributes of its slums. The attack does demonstrate however, that the urban terrain remains vulnerable to attack by its adversaries.

This reveals a predicament for the state. With resources always being a limiting factor, the state must decide whether to focus assets toward securing the megacity, taking a fortress like mentality, or extend resources into the rural environment in pursuit of insurgent safe havens.

In the first scenario the state will surrender the rural areas to the insurgency, allow for its continued growth and likely face a more persistent and capable threat in the future. This was evident in Afghanistan where at times the pulse of the nation was taken by the level of security in its provincial capitals. Overtime however and in sequence with growing urban defense initiatives the threat continued to rise. In 2012, the primary focus of many security forces was to identify and interdict what was termed “massive vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices,” a threat that was developed to overcome the fortress like nature of many coalition bases. The insurgents in this case, originating in the rural environment, continued to develop means to circumvent urban security infrastructure, eventually finding success as seen in both Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>129</sup>

In the second scenario, where the state chooses to pursue the insurgency in its safe havens, the state may accept a level of exposure in the city. However, it stands a chance to eliminate or reduce insurgent growth while keeping its adversary displaced in the rural environment.

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<sup>129</sup> Iraq: 250Kilogram bomb enters Bagdad circumventing multiple checkpoints and kills over 250 people. <http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticlePrintPage.aspx?id=2511908&language=en>; Afghanistan: Afghan Taliban kill at least 28 in major attack in central Kabul. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSKCN0XG0BO>.

Last, the same economic prosperity that created Mumbai also allowed for the creation of a sufficient internal security apparatus. Although India faces insurgent opposition throughout its rural areas, specifically the Kashmir region, its internal security elements have proven adequate for thwarting long-term insurgent occupation of the urban terrain. In light of this, India's future counterinsurgency strategy against LeT will likely occur in the rural areas of the Kashmir and in the political arena rather than the streets of Mumbai.

## **VI. CASE STUDY #3—NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT, ALGIERS, ALGERIA**

The Algerian war of 1954 to 1962 is often studied for instances of urban combat, specifically the Battle of Algiers. The insurgency within the city was only a portion of the overall insurrection. The *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) also relied heavily on third-party sponsors and rural populations in Algeria's ungoverned border regions for their growth, organization and resupply.

After being driven out of rural Algeria, the FLN changed its insurgent strategy and sourced operations from the urban environment, specifically the densely populated Muslim quarter of Algiers known as the Casbah. Although favorable demographics and the physical dynamics of the Casbah allowed the FLN an opportunity to reorganize, upon recognition, French counterinsurgency operations quickly stunted the FLN's urban initiative.

### **A. URBAN ALGERIA**

The growth of cities in Algeria from the 1920s to the 1950s closely resembles the rapid growth of today's megacity. Over the course of thirty years, the urban population in Algeria doubled as impoverished rural peoples fled to urban environments in hopes of capitalizing on their commercial growth.<sup>130</sup> The late Professor John Ruedy of Georgetown University described the friction caused when rural peasants began moving into the city, a place that had been previously dominated by French and European colonists. He stated that "physical proximity within a framework of institutionalized inequality only heightened intercommunal tensions."<sup>131</sup>

With friction growing between urban inhabitants, the Muslim population overcrowded its own sections of the city, particularly the Casbah. Author John Talbott

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<sup>130</sup> John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 156.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

described the Casbah in 1952 as “one of the most populated slums in the world.”<sup>132</sup> Although French General Paul Aussaresses described the Casbah as “an old town made up of a series of narrow streets laid out as a maze, where houses all had inner courtyards and terraces offering the rebels ideal places to hide and operate,” it served as the eventual location of the FLN’s tactical defeat.<sup>133</sup>

## **B. NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT**

The *Front de Libération Nationale* can be traced back to the *Parti Communiste Algérien* (PCA) which was created in 1935.<sup>134</sup> Following the arrest of most of its leadership, the *Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratique* (MTLD) was formed, but also struggled to properly address Algerian grievances.<sup>135</sup> In 1954 due to continued quarrels amongst the party, the FLN emerged as a unifying organization, establishing both interior and exterior delegations with the shared intent of ousting its French colonizers and establishing an Islamic state.<sup>136</sup>

### **1. Insurgent Strategy**

Throughout the war in Algeria, the FLN altered its insurgent strategy based on its *Parti Communiste Algérien* roots, FLN sponsors and changing French tactics. During the initial phases of the insurgency, the FLN’s insurgent strategy closely conformed to Galula’s “Orthodox Pattern” or “Communist approach.”<sup>137</sup> Communism seemed intertwined into most conflicts of the era, and British historian Martin Thomas highlights evidence of it within the FLN as well. He stated that “Algerian nationalists based in France implemented the organizational example of the French Communist Party (PCF)

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<sup>132</sup> John E. Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954–1962* (New York: Knopf, 1980), 79.

<sup>133</sup> Paul Aussaresses and Robert L. Miller, *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counter-terrorism in Algeria 1955–1957* (New York: Enigma, 2005), 64.

<sup>134</sup> Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson, *Revolutionary Terrorism: The FLN in Algeria, 1954–1962* (Stanford, Ca. : Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 6.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 8–9.

<sup>137</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 30.

and [used] the vocabulary of working class radicalism.”<sup>138</sup> The FLN successfully created a nationalist political party, established a mass base of rural support and as Galula suggests, began organization “into both open and clandestine apparatuses.”<sup>139</sup> Ruedy describes the thoroughness of preparation conducted by the FLN, leveraging a long history of growing insurrection amongst the native Algerians and their French colonizers. He noted “8,500,000 people do not simultaneously initiate any enterprise ... rebels managed progressively to rally layer after layer of Algerian society, starting with disillusioned small-town youth and impoverished peasants and ending up eventually with most of the privileged urbanites.”<sup>140</sup>

However, once the French identified a significant build-up of anti-colonial guerrillas in the rural environment, the French altered their tactics. French forces, learning from their recent struggles in Vietnam, fenced off the Algerian borders and divided the countryside into small sectors called *quadrillage*. In order to cut off supplies from the guerrillas, they began resettlement of rural families to areas outside of FLN control.<sup>141</sup> With this system in place, the French temporarily subdued the rural insurgency, forcing the FLN toward the cities.

Seeking safe haven in the urban environment, the FLN was short on supplies and continued to struggle with organization. It was forced to change its insurgent strategy to reflect more of a “Bourgeois-Nationalist Pattern.”<sup>142</sup> The FLN hoped that the use of terrorist tactics would accelerate their movement and increase international awareness.

## **2. Adequacy of Infrastructure and Operational Access**

The *Front de Libération Nationale*’s support infrastructure extended well beyond the city of Algiers. Early in the war the FLN and its armed component, the *Armée de Libération Nationale* (ALN) exploited the ungoverned nature of the rural environment

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<sup>138</sup> Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, Palgrave Macmillan September 2000, 9.

<sup>139</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 31.

<sup>140</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 156.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 166.

<sup>142</sup> Paul Aussaresses and Robert L. Miller, *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counter-terrorism in Algeria 1955–1957* (New York: Enigma, 2005), 26.



and used infrastructure created by French colonists in the 1830's to travel to Morocco and Tunisia for training and resupply.<sup>143</sup>

In addition to using existing transportation infrastructure to facilitate movement to training venues, the roads and railways transiting the rural areas allowed almost unimpeded access to arms early in the war. Here the FLN seized on Communist support as they received weapons, funding and personnel from Communist Czechoslovakia and East Germany.<sup>144</sup> World War II veteran and historian, Colonel Virgil Ney points out that in 1958, even after three years of fighting, the French estimated that the ALN was receiving up to 2,000 weapons per month from Morocco and Tunisia.<sup>145</sup> Overly focused on occupation of the urban terrain, the French were only able to capture approximately 400 each month.<sup>146</sup>

Throughout the war, the FLN maintained access to its desired attack objectives by altering its movement techniques based on observation of French tactics. Although the French initiated strict population control measures such as checkpoints and curfews, the FLN began using women, who were often free to move about unimpeded. However, these women were not typically trained in the city as the rural environment provided a much better safe haven. Writer and revolutionary Frantz Fanon describes in his 1965 book, *A Dying Colonialism*, that women would often times leave their families behind and head to the mountains for months at a time before returning to a supportive family to carry out attacks against the French.<sup>147</sup>

Upon shifting to an urban strategy and in an attempt to cripple the French will to maintain Algeria as a colony, Ben M'Hidi, the FLN leader at the time, increased terrorist-style attacks, deeming every European colonist a potential target.<sup>148</sup> With these orders,

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<sup>143</sup> Mallory Davis, *The FLN's Strategy for Gaining an Independent Algeria, 1954–1962*, (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2007,) 5.

<sup>144</sup> Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, 55.

<sup>145</sup> Virgil Ney, *Notes on Guerrilla War: Principles and Practices* (Washington: Command Publications, 1961), 13.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>147</sup> Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism* (Grove Press, 1967), 108–109.

<sup>148</sup> Davis, *The FLN's Strategy for Gaining an Independent Algeria*,” 5.

the FLN embraced the “short-cut pattern” conducting indiscriminate bombing of military, police and civilian establishments alike.<sup>149</sup>

The ALN launched these attacks from the Casbah, the Muslim quarter of the city of Algiers. In May of 1956, a reporter from the Chicago Daily Tribune described the Casbah as “an area of twisting, narrow streets, crumbling houses and dark patios...today the Casbah is jammed with throngs of white clad veiled women and men in robes or shabby western dress. Outdoor markets are squeezed into the streets, some so narrow two persons can hardly walk abreast.”<sup>150</sup> The description provided sounds as if the Casbah of 1956 resembled modern day megacity slums. While this complex terrain initially allowed for an urban base of operations, the French leveraged this against the FLN, which enabled them to tactically defeat the insurgents.

### **3. Availability of Income**

Maintaining both rural and urban bases for their insurgency, the FLN received funding from a variety of sources. Critical to the FLN’s continued operations was aid from Tunisia and Egypt, who provided both financial and material support.<sup>151</sup> In addition to and amongst other more direct finance methods, Galula notes more inconspicuous methods were also used, stating that “Red China shipped tea to the FLN in Morocco, where it was sold on the open market” and used to fund the insurgency.<sup>152</sup>

In addition to the FLN’s taxation of local Algerians, which netted approximately \$300,000 dollars annually, Algerian workers residing in France provided significant funds to the FLN, by some estimates up to USD \$900,000 annually.<sup>153</sup> The FLN’s success, although often misconstrued as isolated to support from within the city of Algiers, was heavily reliant on funding supplied by both emigrants and third-party sponsors.

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<sup>149</sup> Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, 57.

<sup>150</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, “French Search Algiers Casbah,” May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1956, 7.

<sup>151</sup> Henry Jackson, *The FLN in Algeria: Party Development in a Revolutionary Society* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 25.

<sup>152</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 26.

<sup>153</sup> Jackson, *The FLN in Algeria*, 46, 39.

#### **4. Favorable Demographics**

Demographics played a crucial role for the FLN in Algeria. While Europeans dominated urban Algeria in the early 1900s, the urban Muslim population began to swell in the years leading up to the revolution. By 1954, Muslims made up 63% of the urban population and maintained 97% of the rural population.<sup>154</sup> This gave the FLN a significant population of ethnic Algerians with shared Muslim faith and common political grievances to recruit from. Given the demographic favor, the FLN rallied support from the large, poor, rural populations before shifting its focus toward the urban environment.

Upon moving into the city of Algiers and prior to being wiped out there by the French, the FLN had a reliable base of support in the Casbah. With a Muslim population there exceeding eighty thousand, the FLN maintained approximately 5,000 members, 150 being hard-core terrorists.<sup>155</sup> French tactics initially only strengthened support for the FLN. Ruedy stated that “even when it did not indiscriminately target the innocent, tended for every authentic revolutionary it killed or imprisoned to multiply the alienation factor by turning that person’s family and friends into revolutionaries.”<sup>156</sup>

#### **5. Invisibility**

Initially, favorable demographics coupled with the maze-like nature of the Casbah provided a sufficient level of invisibility for the FLN. This allowed ALN guerrillas to successfully navigate to desired targets, conduct the attack and slip back into the crowded warrens that made up the Casbah. However, upon breaking the threshold of violence, the same factors that provided FLN guerrillas with invisibility throughout the city, left them vulnerable to French counterinsurgents. The French 10<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment used the grid like layout of the city, cordoned the Casbah and conducted heavy handed population control measures to highlight FLN activity for French action.<sup>157</sup> In essence, the infrastructure and favorable demographics still existed, but as Professor Gordon

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<sup>154</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 121.

<sup>155</sup> Anthony Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 57.

<sup>156</sup> Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 163.

<sup>157</sup> Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, 58.

McCormick would suggest, the FLN was no longer invisible and could easily be affected by French forces.

In addition to the negative physical attributes of the Casbah, the dense population that existed within Algiers provided the French with a significant number of Algerian informants. Chairman of international relations at St. Joseph's University, Anthony Joes assessed in his book *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, that "it was not difficult to find Muslims willing to work against the FLN"<sup>158</sup> The French simply detained and interrogated any person whom they suspected of having valuable information.<sup>159</sup> With a wealth of information coming in, the French pieced together the insurgent network and began disassembling the FLN's urban infrastructure. John Talbott, Professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara observed that "by such methods, the paratroops deprived the secret organization of its secrets. They forced the terrorists on the run, discovered their caches of bombs and guns, disrupted the flow of money and supplies, discouraged recruitment, reduced and then nearly eliminated bombings, shootings, and stabbings that had brought them to the city."<sup>160</sup>

With nowhere for the FLN to hide or reconsolidate, the French operations, while often brutal, defeated the FLN in the city. Professor Joes claims that "it is a textbook case of what happens when would-be guerrillas systematically violate the advice and example of Clausewitz and Mao Tse-tung regarding how to wage guerrilla war."<sup>161</sup>

### C. CONCLUSION

Although many of the elements required for insurgent occupation of the urban environment existed, the FLN did not choose the city exclusively for its base of operations. The FLN systematically grew the insurgency in the rural environment, across international borders and across a range of economic classes. The FLN only shifted to an

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<sup>158</sup> Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, 59.

<sup>159</sup> Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, 86.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>161</sup> Joes, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare*, 58.

urban, “bourgeois pattern” insurgency out of necessity, which ultimately led to the organizations *tactical* defeat.

The dynamics of the urban environment, specifically those of the Casbah (which can be compared to those of the modern day megacity slum) only temporarily supported a safe haven for armed insurgents. The element of invisibility proved extremely difficult for the FLN as the dense population of Algiers coupled with the grid like layout of the city, allowed for sufficient intelligence collection, effective targeting and overall successful counterinsurgent operations. Given these conditions and immediately after breaking the French’s allowed threshold of violence, French Paratroopers tactically defeated the urban based FLN in less than a year.

The counter-argument is one however that suggests that the FLN successfully used the urban environment to publicize the brutal tactics used by the French, to build international disapproval for colonial regimes. The contrarian can argue that in the case of Algiers, the urban environment was critical to the FLN’s strategic success. While this argument may be valid when studying insurgent strategic planning or international messaging, the focus of this research is to determine if the environment itself was suitable. This argument does illuminate however, that operations in the urban environment may garner increased scrutiny from the international community than those same operations conducted in the rural areas. Understanding this, the French could have limited its brutal interrogation techniques and in the modern era, used a variety of other intelligence collection efforts in order to better appeal to the international community.

While Algiers of the 1950s lacked the level of technology seen in today’s megacity environment, it shares many of the difficulties seen today by insurgents in their attempts to occupy urban terrain. The case reinforces that overpopulation and urban slums are of no late creation, but an environment that has been tested by insurgents for decades. Even given the significant demographic advantage, insurgents struggled to hold the urban ground in competition with the occupying power.

## **VII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **A. FINDINGS**

The goal of this study has been to assess whether villages still matter in the face of global urbanization. For this purpose, research on the current trends in global urbanization weighed the benefits and drawbacks of megacity growth. Three case studies covered a wide geographic range, with the contemporary cases in areas with some of the highest rates of urbanization. While the historic case also broadened the geographic scope of the study, it also provided insights on how each variable influenced success or failure once the insurgency was introduced in the urban environment.

Arguing that demographic shifts in the world's population combined with the poor conditions generated by megacity growth will create the next counterinsurgency environment may still remain an unproven hypothesis. In 2016, 34 megacities existed. Tokyo, Manila, Mumbai, Shanghai and New York City all topped the charts as some of the largest megacities in the world, but none of them appear to be collapsing in competition with armed urban insurgents. Evidence suggests that insurgencies operating in these regions, specifically Mumbai and Manila are showing little sign of attempting exclusive armed occupation of these urban areas and instead have continued to demonstrate reliance on the rural regions as their primary safe havens. Both the Communist People's Party-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) in the Philippines as well as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Pakistan rely heavily on the rural mountainous regions for sanctuary and only appear to use their respective megacities for finance operations, the promotion of non-violent political entities or to garner support through acts of terror. These acts of terror however, appear to be temporary in nature as the state security apparatus has proven capable of pushing guerrillas out of the megacity, back into their rural bases. This suggests that the megacities may remain a prime target for high profile attacks, but the insurgents will likely maintain the rural villages as their primary safe haven.

Given the cases researched, evidence has revealed that the CPP-NPA as well as the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) in Algeria both attempted urban-based insurgencies, but were faced with structural challenges that led to their tactical defeat or withdrawal back to the rural environment. During their attempts to occupy the urban terrain, multiple factors stood out as barriers to their success. First, the same economic prosperity that created the megacities appears to have also created a sufficient security apparatus capable of eliminating persistent armed insurgent presence. Given the state's ability to react, the physical organization of the megacity combined with the complex social structure of the slums improved counterinsurgent intelligence collection efforts as well as their ability to cordon off and clear areas of concern. In India, foreign fighters are withdrawing from the urban terrain and seeking safe haven in the neighboring mountains because of their inability to blend in with the local urban inhabitants. With cultural indicators illuminating their presence and a dense population of potential police informants, these guerrillas find the rural environment less vulnerable for persistent armed occupation. In addition and although improved cellular communication may assist in insurgent coordination in less developed regions, other evidence suggests that within the urban environment, these technologies may serve as a greater advantage to the state, increasing the vulnerabilities and potential costs to urban insurgents.

In addition to the structural barriers to insurgent occupation, urban-rural polarization may continue to increase as megacities rise in relative state power and focus economic gain toward urban initiatives. As Manila continues to grow, the state may get the sense that the benefits of urban investment outweigh that of the rural. The CPP-NPA continues to capitalize on this polarization, exploiting increased levels of perceived relative deprivation, further acquiring rural recruits mostly without the need for intimidation. This increasing polarization can be observed within the nation's GDP as well. Manila alone provides 37.2% toward the Philippine GDP, while rural mining only provides 2.8%. Maintenance and security of the megacity in this case may instinctively serve as more appealing to the state than the less prosperous rural environment. The 2.8% from the countryside, however, provides the CPP-NPA with over 5.4 million USD per year in revolutionary taxes, making the rural terrain a less contested or vulnerable

location for unimpeded and fortuitous reorganization. Further evidence exists in China, the current megacity leader, who has implemented control measures to block rural migration into the cities. These measures coupled with a decrease in rural access to education and government services are causing further polarization, creating a large population of disenfranchised rural citizens. These populations serve as potential recruits for growing rural insurgencies.

Last, the Lashkar-e-Taiba case highlights a predicament that may resonate for other nations as well. India faces two types of insurgent threats: a series of internal, Maoist type insurgencies, and LeT, who remains outside the state's military and political reach. Some would argue that in this case, India, specifically Mumbai, should take a fortress-like approach and focus its security resources on the urban environment in attempt to prevent insurgents from conducting high profile attacks, and cede the rural environment to those who wish to occupy it. In essence, their efforts would not attack the rear echelons of the insurgency, but protect its citizens on the "front lines." This approach may be insufficient however, leaving the threat unchecked in the rural environment where they will continue to grow, serving as a persistent threat which will inevitably challenge the state's authority.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

As military planners and strategists prepare for future conflict, a balance should be drawn between urban and rural counterinsurgent capabilities. A recent fascination with megacity growth has assumed that urban attacks equate to urban insurgency, while trends suggest that insurgents continue to prefer the rural environment as their safe havens. A nation should not believe that the security of its capital reflects the security of the entire nation. In the cases researched, the detonation of a bomb in a megacity did not necessarily equate to the emergence of an urban insurgency, but rather the mobilization of one that grew unimpeded in a rural environment.

The United States military will face urban combat challenges and therefore must be prepared for the task. However, planners must decide when it will be necessary to



pursue the enemy in their rural safe havens or risk the second and third-order effects associated with militarization of the urban environment.

The U.S. Armed Forces should continue its partnership with allied security forces, emphasizing access to the rural environment and the extension of government resources to those living outside the megacity. Improving national infrastructure and making megacity prosperity inclusive to the remainder of the state may reduce perceived relative deprivation and improve urban-rural relationships. Although focused development of the megacity may appear to have greater benefits to the state, rural inclusion may also pay long-term security dividends.

This thesis does not suggest that megacities are free of vulnerabilities or do not present significant security concerns. Rather, this thesis suggests that a balanced approach to urban and rural counterinsurgency will be required in the future. With insurgents clearly exploiting the benefits of both environments an over intoxication with megacity military operations may leave the hinterlands more vulnerable to insurgent occupation. Critical toward United States counterinsurgency strategy is maintaining the ability to operate in, influence and mobilize rural populations. If in tomorrow's conflict we choose to take the fight to the where the insurgent seeks refuge, it will likely occur in the mountains, jungles and deserts for control of the villages.

### **C. AREAS FOR CONTINUED RESEARCH**

This research only presented three major examples of how insurgents operated in relation to existing megacities. Given that there are 34 megacities today and statistics on the growth of megacities is readily available, quantitative research could be conducted to classify the number of historical urban or rural based insurgencies in relation to the number of existing megacities. This could be compared to present-day statistics in order to determine if insurgent organizations are trending toward urban bases or if insurgents have and/or will continue to use rural areas as their primary safe havens.

This research did not produce evidence of an insurgency that has chosen a megacity or its slums as a primary safe haven or source of support. Further research

could be conducted which may show this, and suggest under which conditions the megacity would be best suitable for insurgent occupation.

#### **D. AUTHOR'S CLOSING NOTE**

At the beginning of this research and during the initial examination of my question “do villages still matter in counterinsurgency,” it seemed to me that the answer would be “no.” After departing from the rural-based “Village Stability Operations” model used by Special Operations in Afghanistan, the aforementioned fascination with megacities continued to emerge and generated numerous reports, articles and books, most notably David Kilcullen’s *Out of the Mountains*. Kilcullen’s book along with other contemporary publications correctly highlighted statistics and data illuminating the global demographic shifts of populations from rural to urban areas. However, those authors assumed that insurgents would move with those populations into cities and in accordance with Mao Zedong’s famous observation that “the people are the sea in which, like fish, insurgents swim.”<sup>162</sup> But my study of insurgent operations in three major cases showed that Mao’s dictum, based on his experience leading a rural-based insurgency, did not readily transfer from the countryside to megacities. This discovery was a surprise to me. As I note in my conclusion, there is still much research that can and should be done on the phenomenon of 21<sup>st</sup>-century insurgency. However, the cases described here plainly disprove the presumption that future guerillas and revolutionaries will abandon the hinterlands to base their operations in the slums and ghettos of cities and megacities. This means that in combatting or instigating an insurgency, villages will still matter. This also means it will be important for special operations forces to know how to traverse the forests, navigate the swamps, cross the desserts—and go into the mountains. As long as there are hinterlands, the insurgents will still be there, for years to come.

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<sup>162</sup> Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, trans. and intro. by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Praeger, 1961), Chapter 6.

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